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The specification and drawings have been amended to improve clarity of the already existing disclosure. No new matter has been added.

The specification at page 7, li 9 has been amended to read:

> Valve relief 58 allows the practitioner to selectively close the hemostatic valve or tuohy-borst coupler (together with an introducer collectively represented by the dashed line element 27) about valve relief 58, reducing back bleed while permitting free movement of the delivery system 10 during the procedure.

And at page 11, li. 12 has been amended to read:

> Valve relief 58 may be detached from the strain relief 22 and is positioned in the hemostatic valve or tuohy-borst coupler [(not shown)] (an outline of which connected to an introducer is shown by dashed line 27) which is then is tightened down around the valve relief 58.

From this text and using the knowledge of a person skilled in the art, it is clear that the coupling member is the hemostatic valve or tuohy-borst coupler or an equivalent device. From the passage on Page 11, the text clearly presents the situation where the valve relief is detached from the strain relief 22 and positioned in the coupling member (e.g., the hemostatic valve or tuohy-borst coupler). The release of the valve relief from its engagement with the strain relief, engagement in the coupling member, and later retightening, clearly implies a user chosen tightening location or "selective(ly) coupling."

Claim 7, has also been amended to more clearly identify the invention of its recited subject matter.

Claims Rejection - Section 102(b)

Claims 1, 6, 8-12, and 14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Braunschweiler et al. (U.S. PN 5,484,444).

Claim 1 has been cancelled and claims 6, 8-12, and 14 which previously depended from Claim 1 have been amended to depend from Claim 2, which has replaced Claim 1, as the primary independent claim.

Claims Rejection - Section 103(a)

Claims 2-5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Braunschweiler et al. (5,484,444) in view of Lenker et al. (5,683,451).

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Claim 2, now an independent Claim, has been amended to recite a channel spacer. To the extent that there are members with channels shown in the cited prior art, none of those channel containing members can reasonably be characterized as a spacer, consistent with the present specification. Brauschweiler, by Examiner own statement does not contain a channel member. Lenker, also cited by the Examiner contains channels in the outer shaft, not in a channel "spacer" separate and apart from the inner and outer shafts.

Lenker discloses channels "in" the catheter cover or shaft. Lenker fails to disclose a channel "spacer" "between" the inner shaft and the outer shaft, which could be reasonably characterized as "spacer" as that the structure associated with that description is described in the specification. Nor is there any suggestion to combine Lenker '451 with the '444 patent and therefore the requirement for a rejection on the basis of obviousness have not been met.

Claims Rejection - Section 103(a)

Claim 7 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Braunschweiler et al. (5,484,444) in view of Williams et al. (5,391,172).

Claim 7 has been amended, by amendment of the Claims from which it depends as well as amendment of Claim 7 itself. The unsuggested combination of the '444 patent with Williams '172, does not present a sustainable rejection over the amended Claim 7.

Unlike the valve relief which is conspicuously absent from the disclosure in Williams '172. There is no correlation with the fixed "flush port" 250 described in Williams '172. In the present application a "[v]alve relief 58 allows the practitioner to selectively close the hemostatic valve or tuohy-borst coupler about valve relief 58, reducing back bleed while permitting free movement of the delivery system 10 during the procedure," anywhere along the length of the catheter. This is nothing like the function described in the Williams '172 patent. Nor is there any suggestion to combine Williams '172 with the '444 patent and therefore the requirement for a rejection on the basis of obviousness have not been met.

Claims Rejection - Section 103(a)

Claim 13 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Braunschweiler et al. (5,484,444) in view of Lange et al. (6,036,682).

Claim 13 has been amended, by changing the claim from which it depends. Reconsideration is requested.

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CONCLUSION

Applicant believes that claims are patentable for the reasons set forth above, and that the application is now in a condition for allowance. Accordingly, an notice of allowance is respectfully requested.

Dated this 5th day of February, 2003.

Respectfully Submitted,

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AMENDED CLAIMS MARKED UP

1. (Cancelled) A stent delivery system, the system comprising:

a) an inner shaft having a proximal end and a distal end;

b) an outer shaft moveable with respect to the inner shaft, the outer shaft having a proximal end and a distal end;

c) a stent receiving area on the inner shaft adjacent the inner shaft distal end;

d) a tapered tip mounted on the inner shaft distal end;

e) means coupled to the inner shaft and outer shaft for manipulating the outer shaft with respect to the inner shaft; and

f) a stent positioned in the stent receiving area..

2. (Twice Amended) [The] A stent delivery [system of claim 1] system, the system comprising:

a) an inner shaft having a proximal end and a distal end;

b) an outer shaft moveable with respect to the inner shaft, the outer shaft having a proximal end and a distal end;

c) a stent receiving area on the inner shaft adjacent the inner shaft distal end;

broader d) a tip mounted on the inner shaft distal end;

e) means coupled to the inner shaft and outer shaft for manipulating the outer shaft with respect to the inner shaft;

f) a stent positioned in the stent receiving area; and [further comprising]

narrower different g) a channel [member] spacer disposed between the inner shaft and the outer shaft.

3. (Twice Amended) The stent delivery system of claim 2 wherein the channel [member] spacer defines a plurality of channels extending along a length of a lumen defined between the outer shaft and the inner shaft.

New scope! Combination of elements

6. (Twice Amended) The stent delivery system of claim [1] 2 and further comprising a radiopaque marker on the inner shaft approximate the stent receiving area.

7. (Twice Amended) The stent delivery system of claim [1] 2 and further comprising a

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coupling member [on said outer shaft] and a valve relief on said outer shaft, the coupling member selectively coupling the valve relief to the outer shaft.

8. (Twice Amended) The stent delivery system of claim [1] 2 wherein the means coupled to the outer shaft and inner shaft comprises a handle with a reciprocating knob coupled to the outer shaft whereby the outer shaft is moved with respect to the movement of the knob.

9. (Twice Amended) The stent delivery system of claim [1] 2 wherein the means coupled to the outer shaft and inner shaft includes a moveable knob coupled to the inner shaft for moving the inner shaft longitudinally with respect to the outer shaft.

10. (Twice Amended) The stent delivery system of claim [1] 2 wherein the tip has a proximal end and a distal end and the tip is tapered towards its distal end.

11. (Twice Amended) The stent delivery system of claim [1] 2 wherein the stent receiving area has a stent stop.

12. (Twice Amended) The stent delivery system of claim [1] 2 wherein a stent stop comprises a radiopaque marker.

13. (Twice Amended) The stent delivery system of claim [1] 2 and further comprising a radiopaque marker on the distal end of the outer shaft.

14. (Twice Amended) The stent delivery system of claim [1] 2 wherein the stent has a plurality of segments in a first radial position and a plurality of second segments in a second radial position when in an unexpanded configuration.